

TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM of TEXAS

UPDATE

TRS OFFERING VIRTUAL TRAININGS FOR TRS REPORTING

This spring, TRS will be offering virtual training options for Reporting Employer (RE) personnel. While the trainings will be targeted toward specific audiences, anyone may register and attend. Trainings for higher education and non-higher education employers will be held separately.

We are excited to announce a half-day, specialized training for Human Resources personnel that will focus on TRS membership eligibility, Employment After Retirement (EAR), and other topics. This class will assist HR with coordinating and communicating with those who submit monthly TRS reports, such as the payroll department.

HR Training for Non-Higher Ed	Tuesday, April 20, 2021	9 a.m.–12 p.m.	Registration Link
HR Training for Higher Ed	Thursday, April 22, 2021	9 a.m.–12 p.m.	Registration Link

Additionally, we will hold full-day trainings for those who are relatively new to TRS reporting. These will cover the laws and rules regarding membership eligibility, creditable compensation, required employer contributions, and EAR, as well as functionality of the RE Portal.

Intro to TRS for Non-Higher Ed	Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021	9 a.m.–4 p.m.	Registration Link
Intro to TRS for Higher Ed	Tuesday, March 23, 2021	9 a.m.–4 p.m.	Registration Link

Each attendee must register individually through the links provided above. This will ensure that you receive the link to access the web session as well as a copy of the materials being covered.

MAKE SURE TO SUBMIT TEXNET DEPOSITS IN THE CORRECT CONTRIBUTION TYPE

Be very careful when submitting your TEXNET deposits to ensure that you're depositing the correct amount into the account for the correct contribution type. While an RE contact is able to transfer funds between certain contribution types (as long as the transfer is allowed per our Limits on Transfers and Refunds document), some transfers are not allowed at all or require special TRS intervention.

If an RE is not allowed to make the transfer in the RE Portal, but you would like to ask TRS to make the transfer as an exception, please email the following information to your coach:

- Account to transfer the funds **from**
- Account to transfer the funds **to**
- Exact amount of the transfer request
- Reason for the request (for example: funds were deposited into the wrong account by accident, etc.)

One of the most common errors we see is when an RE places the TRS-ActiveCare deposit into the incorrect account, such as RE TRS-Care. To ensure your TRS-ActiveCare premiums are credited correctly as paid on time, please submit the TEXNET deposit into the TRS-ActiveCare account rather than another contribution account.

If you are paying funds owed in RE Penalty Interest (PI), then make this deposit on the PENSION PENALTY INTEREST DUE line of TEXNET.

If you are paying funds owed in TRS-Care Penalty Interest (CI), please make sure that these funds are deposited on the RE TRS-CARE PENALTY INTEREST DUE line of TEXNET.

If you are paying funds owed in Penalty Fees (PF), please remit those on the PENALTY FEE AMOUNT DUE line of TEXNET.

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UPDATED WARRANT HOLD PROCESS FOR DELINQUENT REPORTS & CONTRIBUTIONS BEGINS THIS MONTH

State law requires all TRS-covered employers to submit monthly reports and contributions to TRS to remain in compliance. When an RE does not remit their contributions or complete their reports by the deadlines each month, TRS is not able to invest the contributions in a timely manner.

When an RE is delinquent with their reports or contributions, state law authorizes TRS to place a hold on that RE's state funds with the Texas Comptroller.

For the past three fiscal years, TRS has allowed REs a one month grace period after the official deadline to submit and complete all required information without being charged penalty fees for being delinquent. We have not pursued the option of holding an RE's state funds in all but the most extreme situations.

However, going forward, when an RE does not meet the penalty fee grace period deadline and/or does not remit the full TEXNET deposits for all owed contributions, TRS will pursue the option of holding an RE's state funds.

This has changed beginning with the Dec. 2020 reports, which were due Jan. 6, 2021 (RP report) and Jan. 8, 2021 (ER report). A warrant hold of state funds will be placed if the report is not complete and/or the full TEXNET deposit for contributions is not received by the grace period deadline (Feb. 5 for the RP report and Feb. 10 for the ER report.) To view the full penalty fee grace period schedule, visit the [Penalty Fees](#) page on the TRS website.

2021 TRS-CARE PLAN INFORMATION AVAILABLE FOR RETIREES

If you have district employees considering retirement or starting the process, TRS has resources they can use to learn about the TRS-Care Standard and TRS-Care Medicare Advantage plans. These health programs are an option even if an employee was not previously enrolled in TRS-ActiveCare. Upon retirement, they have an initial enrollment opportunity.

These resources include information about the 2021 health plan vendors, plan benefits, recorded webinars and more. They can be accessed at www.trs.texas.gov/trs-care2021.

For retirees who will be eligible for Medicare, TRS has a web page dedicated to the turning 65 process and a new quarterly webinar called TRS-Care Medicare & You. Visit www.trs.texas.gov/turning65 to learn more and see a schedule of the upcoming webinars.

TRS-ACTIVECARE \$0 COVID-19 COVERAGE EXTENDED THROUGH MARCH 2021

As we continue to see COVID-19 cases spike in Texas and throughout the U.S., you and your employees well-being is our priority. This is why we've extended \$0 COVID-19 coverage for TRS-ActiveCare through March 31, 2021.

The ability to extend that level of coverage past March depends on the impact COVID-19 related costs have on the TRS-ActiveCare health fund. If they reach a point where they would drive a significant increase to premiums for the next plan year, we will reconsider our approach.

As we monitor the effects of COVID-19 on our participants and the TRS-ActiveCare fund, we'll make the decision quarterly. This is so we can see the most up-to-date financials. We'll alert you to any change one month before the effective date. For example, your next update will come in early February.

We're dedicated to taking action that keeps your TRS health fund strong and reliable, even after the pandemic.

To stay up to date with our COVID-19 coverage, visit www.trs.texas.gov/news_coronavirus.

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COVERED IMMUNIZATIONS AND PREVENTIVE CARE FOR EMPLOYEES

During the pandemic, utilization of preventive services and immunization rates have gone down, with immunizations for children dropping the most.

These delays in care can have detrimental effects on your employees and their families' health. Childhood immunizations are especially important for the long-term health of a child and not receiving them puts them and others at high-risk for certain illnesses.

With a new year beginning, we encourage you to let your employees know that TRS-ActiveCare offers \$0 preventive care services for participants when they use in-network providers. All childhood immunizations are also fully covered when administered by an in-network provider.

For a full list of covered preventive services, visit www.trs.texas.gov/Pages/healthcare_covered_preventive_care.

LAST CALL: PETITIONS FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE POSITION FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TRS is accepting petitions for eligible members to qualify as candidates for the election of the Public School District Employee position on the TRS Board of Trustees. The deadline for receiving these petitions is **Jan. 25, 2021**.

The term of the position begins as early as Sept. 1, 2021 and ends Aug. 31, 2027. An eligible member for this election is a current employee of a public school district, charter school or regional education service center in a TRS-eligible position.

To qualify to be a candidate for nomination, an eligible member must collect 250 signatures from TRS members whose most recent TRS service was performed for a public school district, a charter school or regional education service center. **TRS is offering two ways in which a potential candidate may collect the required 250 signatures.**

1) Electronic Petitions – A potential candidate will declare his/her interest to be a nominee to the [Secretary to the Board of Trustees](#). Once the member's eligibility is validated, the member's name will be posted on the [nomination site](#) where the potential candidate may direct members to sign their electronic petition. The names of nominees will be listed on a first-come, first-listed basis. To sign the electronic petition, members will need to provide identifying information in order to verify their eligibility to sign the petition. The process is easy and only takes a few minutes. **For an electronic petition, the potential candidate does not need to submit anything further to TRS but must have 250 member signatures by Jan. 25, 2021 to be considered a candidate.**

2) Paper Petitions – TRS will also continue to allow potential candidates to collect signatures with paper petitions. **TRS must receive a potential candidate's paper petitions, with 250 eligible member signatures, no later than Jan. 25, 2021.** You may download a [petition \(pdf\)](#) from the Resources section on the Nominations for TRS Board of Trustees Public School District Employee Position page on the [TRS website](#). If you do not have access to a printer, please contact the [Secretary to the Board of Trustees](#) to request a petition be mailed to you.

WATCH AND LEARN: TRS MEMBER EDUCATION VIDEO SERIES

Learn all about your TRS pension benefits by watching our [Member Education Videos!](#) Help us spread the word about the series by downloading a [poster](#) from our website and displaying it at your school.
